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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION; BUSH VETO OF IRAQ WITHDRAWAL BILL; US
REPORT ON ANTI-TERRORISM; CHAVEZ; WEF AND ARGENTINE ECONOMIC
PERFORMANCE; 05/02/07; BUENOS AIRESQMARY STATEMENT

Leading international stories today include US President Bush vetoing an Iraq war spending bill that sets deadlines for troop withdrawal; Argentina in the US State Department counterterrorism report; Chavez taking over the remaining private oil fields in Venezuela; and Argentine Economic Minister Felisa Miceli's attendance at the WEF.

12. OPINION PIECES AND EDITORIALS

- "Bush vetoes bill asking for troop withdrawal from Iraq"

Hugo Alconada Mon, Washington-based correspondent for daily-of-record "La Nacion," writes (05/02) "Yesterday, in the context of one of the worst clashes between Capitol Hill and the White House in times of war, George W. Bush used his veto power for the second time during his presidency to dismiss the Democratic plan to start troop withdrawal from Iraq.

"When doing so, Bush accused the opposition of wanting to promote 'a prescription for chaos and confusion' in the Middle East...

"... Bush's veto epitomizes an impasse between the White House and Capitol Hill in the confrontation over how to continue financing the war.

"The president remains without the funds he had requested for his controversial military plans, and Democrats do not have the necessary votes (at least 65 in the US Senate) to override the presidential veto.

"This is why it is not clear what will happen now that Bush imposed his veto...

"The president has reiterated that he wants to work along with Democrats to obtain the funds required by the military but he never showed (at least in public) that he was willing to compromise.

"... Democrats facing the 2008 presidential elections cannot dismiss the pressure from most Americans who, according to opinion pollsters, support the return of troops as soon as possible."

- "The US praises (Argentina's) antiterrorist policy"

Ana Baron, Washington-based correspondent for leading "Clarín," writes (05/02) "Following the tension in the US-Argentine bilateral relationship created by Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez's anti-Bush rally in Buenos Aires, the US Department of State praised the Kirchner administration's performance in its latest annual report on the world's fight against terrorism.

"As a matter of fact, while the White House believes Chavez is

providing Iran a platform in our hemisphere, Kirchner is perceived as one of the few governments that dared to confront it.

"Regarding the (Argentine) Government's amendment to its anti-money laundering legislation, aimed at reinforcing and overhauling its Financial Intelligence Unit, the report says 'Argentina has cooperated effectively with the US on an operational level and started to solve the institutional and legal weaknesses that had undermined its antiterrorist efforts.'

"... As expected, the report also mentioned the progress made in the investigation of the attack against AMIA and the international warrants for the capture of eight Iranian citizens and one Hezbollah member. This gesture was much appreciated by the White House because it fits in well with its anti-Iran strategy...

"The USG remains concerned over the possibility that Hezbollah and Hamas may collect funds through illegal activities in the Triple Border area although so far it has only produced evidence that members of those two groups are actually operating in the area."

- "Figures"

Paula Lugones, international columnist of leading "Clarín," writes (05/02) "Hugo Chavez took a major step yesterday in benefit of Venezuela's income, a jump into the future. He guaranteed that the wealthiest sector in the country, which has huge potential, will be exploited mostly for the benefit of the State. And, except in a few cases, oil companies did not oppose the measure.

"George W. Bush may protest Chavez's policies, but foreign corporations (including US companies) are satisfied with the numbers and continue doing business in the country."

- "WEF conference journal"

Andrew Graham-Yooll, editor of liberal, English-language "Buenos Aires Herald," penned (05/02) "... The message from the Economy Ministry is that the WEF report covers nearly 15 years and Argentina is a different case now. They all say that. But I seem that Minister Felisa Miceli is holding a candle to a hurricane trying to convince the world that there is dramatic change in Argentina.

"There has been impressive growth since 2003, acknowledged and praised worldwide, but as a destination for investors the country has to persuade with signals of legal and social stability, among other features. Countries are not judged on three and a half year performances, but on a decade or more."

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